MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: Yes.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: What is the standard to be fixed in the matter of daily rations?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: About 36 thousand tons are needed for consumption in a month according to the present enumeration.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: What is the amount of ration to be fixed for a person?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: 10 ounces.

MR. A. P. UDAYABHANU: Have the Government taken steps to supplement this ration by the addition of tapioca and fish?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: Yes.

MR. A. P. UDAYABHANU: May I know in which division such steps have been taken?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: The Tahsildars have been instructed to make tapioca available and to distribute it.

MR. A. P. UDAYABHANU: Has it been done anywhere?

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know whether the Government have enquired whether such measures have been brought into force by Tahsildars?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: Yes, Sir, we have information that several Tahsildars are doing this.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: What are the taluks where that procedure is in force?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: I cannot say off hand.

Shortage in foodgrains depot.

162. * MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) whether there was any shortage in any Government foodgrains depot; and

(*b*) if so, the largest quantity found short in any single depot?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: (*a*) The shortage if any can be determined only on the completion of the stock audit which is now in progress.

(*b*) This could be found out only after the shortage in all the depots is ascertained.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: Sir, my question was: "whether there was any shortage in any Government Foodgrains Depot; and if so, the largest quantity found short in any single depot". The answer is: The shortage, if any can be determined only on the completion of the stock audit which is now in progress. I wish to put a supplementary question whether any shortage in any depot was brought to the notice of the Government or the department?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: No, Sir. The whole thing is being examined. A complete physical verification of the stock has been made and the stock audit which is now in progress will revea whether there is any shortage or not.

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MR. P. S NATARAJA PILLAI: Was the shortage in any particular depot brought to the notice of the Government? I am not questioning the shortage of the whole stock, but I want to know only of the shortage of stock in any particular depot. Was such shortage brought to the notice of Government.

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: No, Sir.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: Was any Depot Officer suspended?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: Yes, Sir. One officer was suspended.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: May I know for what?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: For double payment and other irregularities.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: Was any depot abolished during last year?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: Yes, Sir.

MR P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: Did the depots maintain any stock register?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: Yes, Sir.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: May I know whether the stock in the depot was examined when it was abolished.

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: Depots were audited when they were wound up.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: May I know then whether the stock register which should show the surplus was not examined?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: Sir, it was examined and the report will be submitted after the special Audit officer has completed his work.

PRESIDENT: The honourable member evidently wants to know whether the Government became aware that there was shortage in a depot or not?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: No. Sir.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: Then this is not enough by way of answer.

MR. P. O. THOMAS: So, shall I take it that the honourable member could not ascertain the shortage of stock when he inspected the depot?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: I have already answered the question, namely, no shortage has been brought to the notice of Government now and all shortages will be known only after the special officer submits his report.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know whether he has personally inspected the stock register?

MR. K R. NARAYANA AIYAR: Yes, Sir, in some cases.

PRESIDENT: There seems to be some confusion on this matter. The register will show that there is an amount of stock, but until it is checked, the discrepancy between the register and the actual stock will not be known. The inspection of the stock by any officer

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[President.]

even hundred times will not reveal any shortage without the actual stock being taken into account. Until it is known how much stock came into the depot and how much was spent and the different quantities with special advertence in possession is known, the disparity cannot be found out.

MR. P. O. THOMAS: Sir, it is easy when the departmental head has the accounts of the stock given to the depot.

PRESIDENT: Stock from the depots comes from various places, some by local purchase, some by valloms and some by shipment and so forth; and issues are made from time to time from each depot. A register is kept of these stocks but whether that register tallies with the stock on hand in the depot or not can be ascertained only later on. Even with double accounts, you might still have certain absolute void in the depot? You might know a recent instance of the Government of India selling some Rs. 62,000 barrels of petrol. The stock register was absolutely correct, but when the person who purchased these 62,000 barrels went out to take delivery, one after another the barrels were found to be empty. The matter is now being enquired into. Actually, according to the stock register there was this stock. But the supply department of the Government of India sold this at face value to a local Government and when they went out to take delivery they found out the stock was empty. So that, the stock according to the register will not allow us to entertain any foolish optimism as to the position of stock on hand. I may say that the whole position is being enquired into to see whether there is any laxity on the part of the department or any mistake in the accounts.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know whether at the end of 1119 and 1120, when the preparation of the accounts was completed as per the statement of the member, there was any shortage noticed?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: No, Sir. The matter has been fully explained and I do not think any further elucidation is necessary.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: When a depot has been closed, is not the stock also closed, so that, may I know whether they are not aware of the position of the stock there?

PRESIDENT: Order, order. I do not understand the honourable member's difficulty. If a depot is abolished and if some thousand bags from that depot are sent to some other, how would it be possible to say what stock for a certain period is available in that depot?

MR. K. A. MATHEW: When the actual transfer of stock takes place....

PRESIDENT: Order, order. I want to make clear the rule as regards supplementary questions. Supplementary questions are allowed for the purpose of further elucidation of any matter in regard to which an answer is given. In the House of Parliament only one

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question is put except with the special leave of the Chair. The matter is already dealt with here; so that no member is allowed to rise in his place for putting a supplementary question. Rulings from the Chair 1934 say:

> "Another point that came up for consideration during the last meeting was the convention established in this House by which no member is allowed to rise in his place more than once for putting supplementary questions. It seems to me that the fair and correct rule, having regard to the interest of all the members of the House, is that one member should ordinarily be given only one opportunity to put his series of supplementary questions. It should be remembered that a supplementary question is generally intended to clear up what might have seemed obscure in the answer given to the original question, but not on answers given in reply to supplementary questions themselves. I do not therefore propose to interfere at present with the convention observed in this House.

Then later on the same question arose and I gave this ruling: It is in 1934:

> "The honourable members must kindly remember that so far as supplementary questions are concerned, each person is technically entitled to put questions only once when his turn comes. There has been a relaxation of that rule. What has happened here is that the same person asks many questions one after another, so much so, I am afraid the lack of consideration for the rights of other members has made the question hour less effective. If the same honourable member were to ask many questions, to that extent, he will be subtracting from the time allowed to the other members. Hereafter, whenever questions of general interest come up, I propose to allow each member, who is interested, to put two or three questions during his turn. If necessary, having regard to the public interest aroused, I will give the honourable members a little more time."

I propose to observe that ruling because practically all supplementary questions are put by a few members for the purpose of cross examining the members on the Treasury Benches which they are not entitled to do.

Depot Officer, Parur.

163. ✱ MR. E. K. MADHAVAN: Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) whether they have received complaints against the Depot Officer, Parur; and

(*b*) if so, what action has been taken in the matter?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The matter is under investigation.

MR. E. K. MADHAVAN: May I know the nature of the investigtaion?

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